



# DACE

# DIABLO VALLEY ATARI NEWSLETTER COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

November 1987

RETURN ADDRESS

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### MEETING SCHEDULE

The next DACE meeting will be held at the Willow Creek Center located at 1026 Mohr Lane (see map inside). In December we plan on being back at the Water District Building. Dates for the next three meetings are:

Thursday - Nov 5th - 7 PM  
 Thursday - Dec 3rd - 7 PM  
 Thursday - Jan 7th - 7 PM

### November Meeting Topic

The History of 8-bit Action Adventure Games. 8-bit and ST Disk of the Month. 8-bit and ST software raffle. Dace group buy on 5 1/4 inch blank disks 10 for \$3.00 w/sleeves. Your questions answered and the mysteries of the Universe Solved... **And More !!!**





# PRESIDENTS PAGE

by  
Mark Butler



Another month rolls by in the long tradition of DACE and with it a time to reflect on the experiences and lessons learned in the past month.

One nice thing that happened was the interest in SIG's (Special Interest Groups). At the meeting I asked about interest in setting up a series of informal SIG's that would meet at peoples houses. We got a large response and even some volunteers to host them! The most popular topic was the beginner SIG. Unfortunately DACE cannot provide the kind of one on one support that really makes the difference. We do try to have a question and answer session at the beginning of every meeting, but for people who need extended help these SIG's are just the ticket. With the SIG you can meet at someone's house (or your own) and have a very small group (usually 5 or so) going over the topic in great detail for as long as is necessary. You can boot up your own software and demonstrate the problems you are having. Other SIG's included Business, Adventure Games and Spreadsheets. Join one! Want to get more from Atariwriter? Want to understand Syncalc? Want to know what the "LOCK FILE" option in DOS does? Or perhaps just how to maneuver around in DOS. Perhaps you wanted to move some programs from one disk to another but you only have one disk drive and are not sure how. Join the SIG!

Unfortunately DACE does have a problem. No one has stepped forward to become the new 8-bit disk librarian. This is a real problem, currently the board is handling it by using up backlogged programs. But we are running out of them. The board also is not up on 8-bit anymore. Most of us do not even have a 8-bit computer anymore. This means that unless we get some help there will not be a 8-bit disk of the month. Its as simple as that. It is not a lot of work but it does require some time. The disk librarian will have to call bulletin boards and download programs and put them all together to make a disk. The board can help, we can provide a modem if you do not have one and we can provide support for the putting it all together step. But we need someone to come forward and volunteer some time. This is your chance to really do something for the club. DACE will only survive as long as there are people who will volunteer some of their time.

Last months meeting was a blast. We talked about SIG's and got to see a little of Hardware John's new Mega ST. Nice looking piece of equipment. It looks like Atari rearranged things to make life tough on guys like John though. Both the ST and 8-bit disk of the months were great. The new ST Writer version 2.0 is one that I am going to

have to dig into. The 8-bit DOM was a wonderful golf game (another DACE exclusive) and an awesome music and graphics demo.

To top it all off the guys from InterActive Softworks showed off some of their projects in progress. The City Planner project looks really great. They seemed to think it needed a lot of work but I thought it looked fine. It allows you to define how your city will be created. You make residential areas and connect power and utilities to them so people can move in. You can create industrial areas and of course commute routes so everyone can get to work. There may be a multi-player option with everyone vying to make the most efficient city. Which means (I think) the most number of people in your city, or perhaps the highest standard of living. There are lots of graphs that track how everyone is doing; whether they are dying of pollution or living in mansions.

I think everyone had fun when they loaded up San Francisco and set the natural disaster rating to max. Then we all watched in glee as our favorite city was demolished by tornados, earthquakes, fires, etc. All in all a really nice product, it probably would not appeal to the arcade fanatics but sometimes you have to try something that requires a little grey matter (know what I mean?)

As you know DACE is always looking for ways to bring the message of its existence to others. I hope you are keeping an eye out for ideas. Anyway I was interviewed by the Discovery Bay Sounding newspaper. It seems that they were interested in doing an article on user groups and discovered that we are local to the area. So when you next pick up the Sounder you might just see my ugly mug looking back at you from the pages. Seriously I hope that the article does reach a bunch of people, our problem has always been getting some exposure so people will know we are around. Got any ideas?

Well that about raps me up for this month. I understand that at the next meeting there will be a discussion and demonstration of the evolution of 8-bit action adventure games. Come and see what makes these programs so popular and gain some insights from "knowledgeable" players.

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come to the next meeting and get  
in on the blank disk buy w/sleeves





# Cabbages and Kings

by  
Rick Graham



This column is going to ramble some, so I'm warning you now so you can stop reading or continue at your own risk. That's just the way I feel, like a ramblin' wreck. Anyhow, I thought I'd just give a few opinions on some 'ST' software that I really like.

First of all I don't like WordWriter ST... I love it! I probably use it more than all the rest. In fact I'm using it right now. Timeworks really outdid itself on this one. It has a spellchecker and a Thesaurus and if that isn't enough, it also allows you to create your own personal dictionary. This is very handy as I use some rather archaic terms that really only pertain to one small segment of the chemical industry. I load my personal dictionary and I don't have to listen to the spellchecker beep at me all night! What is nice is when I do misspell a word, instead of having to type it over I just click on the proper spelling in the dictionary then click replace. Hey look Ma no hands! Well almost no hands. I showed this program to a friend at work and recommended that he purchase it as his spelling is atrocious. Well he took one look at it and did just that. His comment was that it was even a better word processor than the mainframes at work. He's absolutely right.

The Thesaurus is incredible. Instead of saying 'very' over and over again I can say: awfully, dreadfully, eminently, exceptionally, extra, extremely, mighty, most, muchly, notably, particularly, uncommonly, and unusually! I'm sure you get the idea. If you want to be the first on your block to own a premiere word processor, buy WordWriterST by Timeworks.

I've been hearing a lot about a program called 'Speller Bee'. So I had a friend give me a demonstration of this spelling tutorial. First of all it's produced and marketed by First Byte and it's got a real twist to it, it talks to you. Believe me the kids will just love it! When it first boots up (and it's real slow so be patient), you get a choice: MY WORDS, SPELL POWER, HELP, and QUIT. Under MY WORDS you get to choose if the speech is off or on, and then you choose between making a list or going to the library. This is the editor

feature. The only thing I don't like about it is that the list are only ten words long and my daughter's lists from school are twenty. Well I guess that's picking nits, and if that's all that's wrong I can stand it.

Anyhow, you can build all your lists and put them in the library. As you no doubt realize speech synthesizers have trouble with some words and First Byte has taken care of this by giving instructions in the Help file of how to use the 'sounds like' feature. If you have a word that is spelled one way and pronounced another you simply tell the program it sounds like something it can pronounce.

After all this, you can relax and use SPELL POWER which already has lists made up. It ranges in skill level from 1st grade to words that would give fits to a college English professor!! I tried it and it stumped me a time or two but it was still fun and done in an interesting manner.

Now as I promised I will ramble a bit more and talk about the subject of Microfloppy disks (31/2). A friend of mine just bought a new ST and decided to purchase a box of Fuji disks and then visit me. He then proceeded to ransack my public domain library and D.A.C.E. disks of the month. I gladly gave him some help and a few disks full of programs, but two days later he was complaining about how all his programs were crashed! Well we kicked it around and were a little suspicious of his drive but some programs worked just fine while others gave real strange errors and results. We decided to copy the disks on SONY no baloney disks...no more problem with the programs as yet. I bought some disks that were used and had programs on them already. I thought I was real smart as I didn't even own an ST and already had a library. Well it was a good idea, but what I wound up with were generic Fujis. I can't tell you how fast I lost those programs and got rid of the Fujis.

Well I've rambled long enough and I'm wrecked, so until next time when we speak of cabbages and kings, color me gone.





## Our 8-bit Ataris and where do we go from here? by Dan Howlett



First and foremost, let me establish my credentials to forecast about the Atari 8-bit scene. Absolutely none! Your idea is as good as mine; but since you haven't heard mine here's some food for thought and a list of comments about industry support for the Atari 8-bit machines.

We all know about our problems getting the support that Commodore and Apple have. Seems that since the great crash of Atari in 1985 we were written off as a market segment by most of the producers of software, and by nearly all of the retail sales people. We all talk about it.

So what to do about it?

1) Complain. This hasn't worked too well so far. We hear all sorts of reasons - small number of Atari machines compared to other brands, rampant piracy, few professional programmers for 8-bits, small sales even when programs are released. Who really knows what the truth is? And, does it really matter? Regardless of what is said by others about us, or what we have said to them, no amount of complaining seems to have changed things. I can hope that more will change things, but I am not optimistic. I am, however, hopeful that other developments will change the developers' attitudes. (Skip to the last paragraphs if you can't stand the suspense).

2) The next thing you can do about no support-PUNT! Move up to a 16-bit machine. Face it, this is where the action is. "Real" computers are perceived as the biggest, most complex, fastest, LATEST ones and this is where the active programmers are doing their work now (and where they are making money to support themselves). Look back 3 years at who was writing 8-bit magazine articles and you'll see those same names on ST things now. I am going to say that there are a limited number of people out there who do Atari programming and they've all moved up to the 16-bit world. We 8-biters are essentially being told to get on the band wagon, or get left behind. And like it or not it, it is their legitimate right to do this. These are business decisions for some, and creative decisions for others. People have a right to earn a living and it's hard to argue

against the speed and memory improvements of the ST (unless you don't have the \$ to spare for one. Don't worry - this isn't an ST ad. Keep reading).

Don't like those choices? Here's what's left.  
3) Learn how and write your own. Some of our own members are already showing the way by writing and donating programs to the disk of the month. Before you dismiss this idea look back at the first two choices. If people won't give you what you want, and you can't argue them into it (or even pay them to do it) then what is left but to do it yourself? It is always easier to complain than to work, but I feel the "no support" message is clear. So get ready to do a little digging and learn how to program your machine. How do you go about writing a program? Where to start? First, decide what you want to do from start to finish. This may seem like trivial advice but in fact most projects fail because they are not finished. It's just too easy to get bogged down in the details of programming if you don't have a clear goal. How to decide? I suggest you look into "The Journal of Computer Game Design" by Chris Crawford. Recent articles include "What makes a fun game?", "How much player interaction does a game really need?", and "What makes a good fantasy game?". This is a new publication and is still in its early stages but has been interesting and informative. You should all remember Crawford from his days at the old Atari. Address: Chris Crawford, 5251 Sierra Rd., San Jose, CA 95132.

Once you've got it designed then how to program it? Here is my list of language choices: 1. Atari Basic 2. Basic XL 3. Compiled Atari Basic (I use the Monarch ABC Compiler-others are available) 4. Advanced Compiled Basic 5. Action! This is, in my opinion, easiest to hardest, slowest to fastest. You should seriously consider compiled Atari Basic. It is generally at least 7 times faster, and allows you to program in a familiar language.

Don't know how to use Basic? Go to DVC and take a course or buy Basic XL. It has an excellent course in the front half of the manual that teaches Basic to the total novice. Want an easier place to start? (continued)



## SUPERWIZZBANG PLUS PART 2

by  
Mark Butler

We continue the saga of the SuperWizzbang Plus upgrade to version 2.

Last time if you recall our intrepid hero purchased his new version and had a few problems getting it installed. During the installation he encountered and mastered several common situations that we have all seen. Now at last he sees on the screen the "SuperWizzbang Plus version 2" opening screen.

"What should I do first?", thinks John. "Lets try the word processor." According to the manual there are only 67 new features in it, it should be a good one to start on. He selects "Word" from the menu and is confronted by a blank screen. His mouse pointer has vanished. Pressing the HELP key does nothing. Consulting the manual John learns that in order to be consistent with future ports to other computers GEM is not used and he must use the F1 key for help. Pressing the F1 key he finds that he must press the F2 key to load a file.

Pressing F2 and typing in the name of the file rewards John with a nasty beep. Wondering what he did wrong, John vaguely remembered something about file incompatibility. Back to the manual.

Ten minutes later John has learned that version 2 does not directly support the version 1 file structure. However there is a conversion utility on disk that will convert the file structures. Exiting SuperWizzbang Plus, John activates CONVERT.TOS.

The converter program converts 1 file at a time. "Geez" John thinks, "I must have a couple of hundred files. Well I'll do 1 now and the rest later." The conversion runs successfully, taking only 3-1/2 minutes and John is now the proud owner of a version 2 file that is 2.1 times larger than his original version 1 file. John re-starts SuperWizzbang Plus.

Loading the file is simple now. John finally gets his document up on the screen. Paging up and down seems slower. The manual warns that some functions might be a trifle slower than version 1's but that it is a small price to pay for added functionality. "No matter" say John, "Lets try some new features..."

Version 1 allowed him to block move by pressing F5 to mark both ends of a block and F6 to move it. Version 2 required him to select the block menu by pressing F5 then he had to run down the menu with the arrow keys until he reached "BLOCK START". Next he moved to the other end and repeated the procedure with "BLOCK END". Finally he selected "BLOCK MOVE" only to be told that he was not

allowed because the block stretched across paragraph boundaries. The F1 help key told him that due to internal file structure changes blocks may not stretch across paragraph boundaries. Multiple paragraph moves must be done 1 paragraph at a time.

"Version 2 now supports macro's" John read. "Lets create one that will capitalize everything just for fun." 1/2 hour later John felt he had mastered macro's. It was simple, you only had to key in the "macro-define" key sequence of Shift-F10, control-left shift, alt-help, shift-insert, and define it. He defined his macro and saved it as "UPPER".

Activation of the macro was even easier. You just did a Shift-F10, control-right shift, right + and right - together, and it would ask you to type in the macro name. Of course macros would only work on marked blocks and you could only mark one paragraph at a time but it was all so easy. John activated his macro and watched as it destroyed his document. 2 hours later he had got the macro right and watched in glee as it changed 1 paragraph at a time into capitals.

"Now to print it" he thought, turning on his printer. Alas if you recall from last time, version 2 did not directly support his ancient Slowpoke-100 and so he used the Slowpoke-200 printer driver. Obviously the printer manufacturer upgrades the same way as Super Wizzbang because the printer driver was not 100% compatible with his model 100 and whenever his model 100 received a code it didn't like it did a page feed. Of course SuperWizzbang Plus did not support printer aborting and so by the time John could switch off the printer it had fed through 162 sheets of paper, most with only 1 or 2 letters on them (just enough to render them useless). Naturally with the printer shut off SuperWizzbang Plus was locked up and John had to reset, thereby discarding his carefully changed file that he had neglected to save before printing.

Thoroughly disgusted with the word processor John converted a spreadsheet file and loaded it. "Seems ok", he thought to himself, "Although it sure doesn't seem any faster." Then he pushed the "CALC" button. Immediately all of his totals went to "ERR" and it beeped rather rudely at him. "Oh great, what did they improve this time", he thought. The manual informed him that they now required quotes in the parenthesis for all cell ranges. "Don't they realize what this does to all my spreadsheets?", John screamed at the walls. "Calm yourself", he said to himself. (continued)



## Wizzbang . . . (continued)

"I only need to change 1 cell and my built in macros will alter all the rest."

5 minutes later he was ready to start up his macro. "ERROR" it beeped at him. It seems that the converter did not convert macro names. That was an oversight that would be corrected in version 3. John renamed his macro and started it up. BEEP BEEP it said. The manual informed him that "due to substantial improvements in the macro language, the old macro format was no longer valid."

With a cry of anguish John hurled SuperWizzbang Plus version 2 into the trash heap. All the files were deleted. He then called up his neighborhood software dealer. "Well I think I still have a SuperWizzbang Plus version 1 in stock but you know they have come out with version 2?". "That's ok", John said, "I'll be right down to pick it up."

2 months later John received a upgrade notice that promised him a discount off the current market value for upgrading his version 1 to version 2.

4 days later the secretary from SuperWizzbang opened her mail and wondered why one of the return envelopes contained nothing but a burned piece of paper.

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## Our 8-bit . . . (continued)

Join the DACE graphics contest. Here is your chance to learn and maybe win a big prize. Everyone who enters gets a prize (of some sort). What's the message of this section? Get involved, get active, and together we can come up with great things.

Last but not least. Tell everyone you know with kids to get the XE Game System for Xmas. This is simply a re-packaged 65XE so any products developed for it WILL RUN ON ANY OTHER 800XL, 65XE, or 130XE! Think about that for a minute. My neighbor would never buy a 65XE for his kid, but he will buy a gaming system. He will see he's getting a fancy game machine, and the software developers will see a MARKET to exploit. The tired excuse of piracy can be laughed at - put everything on bank select cartridges.

If this works the Atari 8-bit user base will increase tremendously, and WE can run the cartridges too! This is a very smart play on Atari's part to increase the number of 8-bit owners out there and if successful would keep interest in the Atari 8-bits up for years. Probably most new stuff would be games, but who knows? If the buying base gets reestablished the developers couldn't afford to ignore it as they have us in the last few years.

You may not be comfortable with the game image stuff all over again. but can things be worse

than now? Personally I'll take support any way it comes and be glad for it. Imagine in a few years all those kids discovering their game system is a word processor too (and everything else these great computers are)! All the peripherals needed exist already and just plug in. It may seem like a backward way to sell computers, but it does fit the way people think, and no one said that ever makes sense. Now, do I want to buy some Atari stock and retire early when they sell a million systems?

## DACE GRAPHICS CONTEST

There are 3 categories for  
both the 8-bit and ST  
STILL PICTURES      ANIMATION  
PROGRAMMED GRAPHICS

### THE RULES

- 1) All graphics must be original works of art NO DIGITIZING and must be previously unreleased material.
- 2) Only one entry per category and all submissions will be released into the public domain.
- 3) You must be a DACE member to participate and entries must be submitted at the January meeting. 8-bit users must use DOS 2 format.

### PRIZES for ALL

## DISK of the MONTH

### 8-bit

This month DACE brings you two 8-bit DOMS. The first is DAISY DOT II a graphics printer utility that gives you numerous different "font" styles of print. The second double sided disk is an all new collection of public domain Print Shop icons.

### ST

This month DACE brings you two ST DOMS. The first is a graphics and sound demo disk with 2 programs: a graphics and sound demo from Germany (in color) and a Awesome new NEO slide show program with Music, scrolling text (that can be changed) and some great new PICS. The 2nd disk contains a mish mosh of programs including: a printer set up utility, New public domain Print Master boards, a financial calculating program, A game called Stocks and Bonds . . . and MORE.





## My Personal Views

by

Bob Pankhurst



I have noticed something about my use of my computers since I purchased an ST. I still do most of my word processing and spreadsheet work on my trusty old 800 and I still prefer to play games on this machine. I asked myself why do I use the old machine so much more than the new one? Well I think I found the answer and the answer may surprise you as much as it did me.

I don't think this apparent resistance to the ST is due to a preference for the 800 or is it based on my familiarity with the old machine. My 800 is on a regular computer desk and its arrangement has been developed over the years. I'm comfortable when I'm using it and I find it a very convenient setup. The ST, on the other hand, is on a regular desk (which is too high for comfortable typing) and the monitor (monochrome) is also just set on the desk making it rather inconvenient to see. The color monitor for the 800 is being used by the ST for color programs (OK for low res., but poor for medium res.) and is located further away than I would like. Also, the disk drive is on the left (the mouse is on the right) and I find this very inconvenient (I'm use to having my 800's drives on the right - old habits are hard to break).

What does this boil down to? The main reason I don't use the ST very much is that it just isn't convenient or comfortable to use. In the rush to get a computer working many of us will just quickly set it down, plug in the cables and power packs, and start it up. (That's what I did with my ST.) Usually little care goes into thinking out our arrangement and we will continue to use it until something forces us to change (maybe a suggestion from our spouse). I am now looking for a new computer desk so that I will be able to truly use my ST. Even if we think we have a good set up for our computer we should stop and look at it and determine if we can make it more comfortable or convenient. We should change anything we can that will make our time on the computer more enjoyable and productive. In my case, the proper furniture will finally allow me to really use my "new" machine.

On the lighter side, I recently purchased

Microprose's F-15 Strike Eagle for the ST. I have really enjoyed this program on the 8-bit and wrote a very lengthy (too lengthy) review of it a few years ago for our newsletter. I'm happy to say that the ST version has kept all the good features of the "old" version and significantly improved the graphics and added many new features. Even with my substandard monitor (I'm using my 8-bit's commodore monitor) the graphics are much more impressive, you see actual airplanes and ground targets instead of "stick" outlines of airplanes and triangles for ground targets. The manual is for the C64, Apple II, IBM, Atari 8-bit, and the ST. In most cases the instructions apply to all the machines, but some of the instructions contain special information for extra's in the ST version.

Just going through the manual convinced me that Microprose made the ST version the best yet. After "flying" it for a little while I came to the conclusion that the ST version is definitely a step up from the others (or at least the Commodore or Atari 8-bit versions, which I've played). Even the instrument panel and the heads up display (the windshield area above the instrument panel) have been improved. I did notice that not only does this one play better, but on the highest level (Ace) the enemy pilots are much better than on the 8-bit version. I have had to drop back a level (to pilot) to play a decent game.

This version includes an additional mission to bomb Libya for the 1986 anti-terrorist airstrike. I haven't flown that one yet, but you are supposed to drop down to 200 feet and light up the afterburner -- that could be some very tough flying! No body said this was easy, but you can put it on the less difficult levels when you are learning how to "fly". I almost hesitate to call Microprose's F-15 or Silent Service games as they are really simulations based on the real thing. I enjoy simulations, but tend to tire of games quickly. Microprose is one my favorite firms, I have almost every simulation they have made and enjoy them all.

I will leave you with a thought for the month -

"Diplomacy is the art of letting someone else have your way."





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The next DACE meeting will be held November 5th at 7:00 PM at The Willow Creek Center located at 1026 Mohr Lane (off Monument Blvd.) in Concord. The map above looks pretty good but maybe after it is photocopied for the newsletter it might be illegible.

The cartoon to the right was digitized and enhanced by John Russell and is an example of one of the many fine exclusive "pics" that are available for download on our BBS.

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# Flight Simulator II ST

A Review by  
Mike McFee



Flight Simulator II for the Atari ST is by far one of the most advanced computer flight simulations for any personal computer I have seen to date. I used to own an Apple IIe and enjoyed Flight Simulator on it. When I sold my Apple and bought an Atari ST all I could think about was the advanced capabilities of this computer.

I had to wait quite awhile for Flight Simulator II to be released for the ST but when it finally came out I rushed down and bought it. When I got home I could hardly wait to open it and boot the disk up. As soon as the program loaded I was up and flying in no time. Due to the previous experience I had with the Apple, I had absolutely no problems flying my prop plane on the ST.

I was most impressed with the crispness of the color on the ST. I like the implementation of the GEM drop down windows which allows for many options and innovations which are not easily accessible with the 8-bit line of computers. Flight Simulator allows you to select either a prop plane or a Lear Jet to fly. The current version of Flight Simulator II works equally well in both monochrome and color. When I first bought the program, Flight Simulator only worked in color. I sent subLogic a letter asking them how I would go about getting a monochrome version and they said to mail in my original disk and they would update the program for me at NO CHARGE when it was available. I mailed them my disk and within a week they returned it to me with the new version. I am quite impressed with the customer support that subLogic gave me as well as their quarterly newsletters that they provide to all registered owners.

FS II has been improved for 16 bit computers tremendously. Controlling your aircraft in FS II is accomplished by either using the mouse, keyboard commands or both. The foremost feature of this program is the ability to have multiple windows open on the screen display for various aspects of flight. As an example, you could have a window open that shows a map of the location in which you are flying and simultaneously have another window open which shows the view from your cockpit. You could even open a third window that allows you view a spotter plane which is like another plane with a camera looking directly back at your plane as you fly.

While flying you may change the view of your plane by either a keyboard command or with a GEM drop down menu. With these commands, you can obtain a view in any of 360 degrees from left to

right or from top to bottom. Another nice feature of FS II is the ability to zoom in and out while in an active window allowing for a greater magnification of your perspective. Although, three windows can be opened only one window modified at a time.

Flight Simulator II also provides another feature which allows for multi-player and even multi-computer flight via modem or null modem cable. Having experienced both modes I can say that I have enjoyed each. The sole reservation that I have is that it is difficult to keep track of the "other" plane during flight.

One of the minor problems associated with Flight Simulator II is the inability to keep flying during disk access. This does not happen very often but this can be annoying at times. I think that this problem could have been avoided by the creation of a ram disk which could have been easily added to the program.

I also have the Mac version of FS II in which the jet sound is more realistic. And while it is true that the ST has one less voice, I think the sound could have been better. There is also one thing that has always baffled me about the 16 bit versions of FS II. Why can't you quit when you want to quit? When you select quit from the drop down menu it doesn't quit... it re-boots the program.

All in all, this program has been one of the most used disks in my library and should be a welcome addition to your software library as well. There is a wide variety of airports and locations available on FS II master disk. If you choose there are also additional scenery disks which you may purchase separately that have detailed landmarks as well as fun things like: Niagra Falls, Hot Air Balloons and the Space Shuttle. These make for very interesting flight. There are currently 2 scenery disks on the market with more to come and a nice binder is available from subLogic for a nominal charge to keep all of your scenery disks in.

I have seen subLogic's product chart and I am somewhat disappointed that they do not have more programs announced for the ST. I would also like to see a life sized controller "stick" for Flight Simulator. SubLogic has promised Jet for some time now and it would be nice to see it on shelves before Christmas. Overall I am very satisfied with their customer support and I am looking forward to may more new and exciting products from subLogic.

BOTH 8-bit AND ST VERSIONS OF FLIGHT SIMULATOR II  
WILL BE RAFFLED AT THE NEXT DACE MEETING.





## WHAT I'VE HEARD

by  
Uncle Chumley



Well, thought that you could get rid of me, Huh? It just isn't quite that easy . . . I'm back again and I'm as rowdy as ever. So let's talk turkey.

November is here and it (as you all know) is the month for cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie and drumsticks. I recently read a small tidbit about Mr. Tom Turkey that I thought you would be interested in. Over the years with extensive breeding it seems that Mr. Tom can no longer "get it on" when he reaches maturity as he is much too fat. In order to bring all of those birds to table on Thanksgiving day, Joe turkey farmer must first artificially inseminate all of the females in order to get all of those little tiny turkey chicks. It is also my understanding that the turkey is just so plain dumb and can drown itself if given too much water. What, pray tell, does this have to do with Atari computers? Well, it all fits into the cosmic scheme of things, so read on.

Power with a price tag . . . Word has it that Atari is getting off their non-advertising keister. Yep, starting November first Atari plans an advertising blitz aimed primarily at the business market. Ads are to appear on TV, radio and such esteemed publications as: the Wall Street Journal, Time and Newsweek. Atari maintains that they will be spending 5.5 million on print ads alone. Boy, that is a lot of cranberry sauce. I wonder if this has anything to do with the across the board hardware price increases that Atari "passed on" to their dealers. And who pays for all this dressing? Why, even a turkey could figure this one out, the consumer of course.

Sellin' like hotcakes -> Rumor has it that there was a limited amount of 8-bit 80 column boxes for sale by dealers at the Northeast Atari Computer fair held in Worcester, Mass. over the Columbus Day weekend. Frenzied 8-bit users were snapping these units up like there was no tomorrow and dealers sold out of them in almost a blink of an eye. I wonder what all the hub bub was about though. To my knowledge, there is no useful practical application of this box currently other than programming BASIC in 80 columns. I understand that there is a "patch" in the works for Atariwriter+ for the 80 column mode.

Those InterActive Softworks guys are pulling more stuff out of their programming magic bag of tricks. In the pike there is a game tentatively titled "SKYCHASE" which is a split screen two player aerial dogfight simulation. The game is currently in alpha test on the ST and Amiga. Don't be too surprised to see it demoed at this month's DACE

meeting. The boys in the office tend to spend a lot of their free time trying to shoot each other down.

Let's be practical . . . Are you interested in a practical application of an Atari ST computer (of course you, are isn't everyone?). Do you like music? Well, have I got a deal for you then. Jim Thomson (DACE member extraordinaire) will be performing as an accompanist for the students of The Nou Dance Company at the Ramada Inn in Walnut Creek on November 21st at 2:00 pm. Admission is \$3 and proceeds benefit the Children's Home Society. Jim has some prerecorded tunes, (of which he personally arranged), that were done utilizing his trusty Atari ST, 2 synthesizers, and a drum machine. If you are interested in what MIDI is all about on the ST, mark your calendars and head on out for this event.

Singin' the dealer blues. A couple of local Atari retailers have been publicly voicing complaints against Atari's inflexible policy of not allowing discounts to the consumer on the new Mega machines. I understand that there is a substantial amount of profit built into the sale of a 4 Meg Mega (about \$700) but Atari stands firm on their retail price. Also in order to have the "honor" of selling the Mega Atari requires its dealers to also purchase a hard disk drive with every Mega. As a result of this price fixing, some retailers where throwing in a free hard disk with the purchase of the Mega as a customer incentive. Atari also nixed this type of deal also warning the dealers to cease and desist. I also have word that Atari has recalled all of the "old" 520STs from the dealer shelves desiring the dealers to sell the new 520STfm (with the built in single sided drive) instead. In addition, I had an unconfirmed report that there were to be no more 1040STs produced. Kind of scary huh?

Give me a look . . . call? A small Irvine, CA company has announced its intention to market a vidiophone. The portable device consists of a 13" color monitor and special computer with a built in modem and camera. This device will allow full motion picture and sound transmission over ordinary phone lines. Imagine being able to see the face of the turkey that is trying to sell you something. A business model is expected to sell for \$12,500 and a scaled down consumer version should hit the market in the fall of 1988 for a mere \$3,500. It may be some time before the average Joe Consumer can afford one of these picture phones but it is my guess that eventually technology will catch up and the prices will indeed come down.

For now this is your Chum . . . signing off.